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Description

This invention relates to a dispenser for cosmetics materials, and relates particularly, but not exclusively, to an eye make-up kit.

Cosmetic compositions for use around the eyes include treatment products and make-up products. The former of these groups includes, for example, lotions, creams etc., for skin treatment, and the latter group includes such colouring compositions as mascara, eyeliner etc., for eyelash, eyebrow and skin colouring, and products for removing such colouring compositions.

A construction of a mascara dispenser comprising a tubular container containing a quantity of mascara, and a screw or snap-fit cap which closes the container and carries an elongate axially extending applicator which normally projects into the container, is well known. Although such dispensers are generally cheap to manufacture, they have certain drawbacks.

Firstly, they hold a relatively large quantity of the mascara, or other cosmetic material and are therefore used over a relatively long period. Over this period, the applicator may be removed from the container and used for the application of material several tens or even hundreds of times, and this can lead to chemical and microbiological contamination of the product within the container.

Secondly, since each known dispenser contains only a single type of colouring material, a variety of different colouring materials can be made available only by the user carrying several separate dispensers. Several such dispensers will occupy a relatively large space in a handbag or the like, and generally can only be retained together if they are all kept in a make-up bag, thus further increasing the problem of bulk.

US-A-2721561 (Dyche) discloses a nail polish kit comprising a holder, a series of containers of a size to fit into the holder, a series of closures for said containers, a series of applicators each of a different size carried by said closures, cooperating means perceptible to the touch on said holder and containers for locating said containers in a definite relation within said holder. A series of nail polishes of varying hues of the same colour family is to be put into the containers.

FR-A-921196 (Piaubert) discloses means for releasably holding together two containers.

In accordance with one aspect of the present invention, there is provided a cosmetics dispenser comprising a plurality of containers or compartments (hereinafter referred to simply as "containers") each for holding a quantity of cosmetics material, and each closed by a respective closure member to which is attached an applicator member which projects into the respective con-

tainer and which can be withdrawn therefrom and used for the application of material retained thereon on withdrawal (such a dispenser is disclosed in GB-A-2 126 890), characterised by means for releasably holding the containers in an assembly so that the containers can be disassembled and re-assembled together or assembled with further such containers, and by a handle which is adapted to be attached to any selected one of the closure members for withdrawal of the applicator from the respective container.

The holding means may comprise a casing for the containers into which the containers are removably fitted, and/or means for releasably connecting adjacent pairs of the containers.

The dispenser according to the invention offers considerable scope and versatility and can provide the basis for a variety of cosmetic requirements. For example, although the containers may all be filled with the same cosmetic product, it is also possible to fill some, or all of the containers or compartments with different materials, thereby to satisfy the user's various cosmetic requirements in a single cosmetic package. For example, the different compartments or containers may hold such different make-up materials as mascara, eyeliner, lip gloss etc. The applicators attached to the closure members may then be of different form, particularly suited to the materials in the respective containers or compartments.

In accordance with a second aspect of the present invention, there is provided a cosmetics dispenser comprising a plurality of containers, each for holding a quantity of a cosmetic composition, and each closed by a respective closure member to which is attached an applicator member which projects into the respective container, and which can be withdrawn therefrom and used for the application of material retained thereon on withdrawal, characterised by a casing within which the containers are removably disposed, and by a handle which is adapted to be attached to any selected one of the closure members for withdrawal of the applicator from the respective container.

The casing may have parts which can move relative to one another between an open position in which the closure members of the containers are exposed and a closed position in which the containers are totally concealed.

The containers may be detachably engaged in a modular arrangement, each module comprising one or more of the containers. In this case the casing may have a plurality of recesses to receive snugly the modules. Alternatively, the containers may be formed as a single compartmentalized container unit.

In accordance with a third aspect of the present invention, there is provided a cosmetics

dispenser comprising a plurality of containers each for containing a quantity of cosmetics material and each being closed by a respective closure member and accommodating an applicator attached to or integrally formed with said closure member characterised in that the containers are arranged as a plurality of modules each having engagement means by which that module is detachably secured to at least one other of the modules, and in that a handle is provided which is adapted to be attached to any selected one of the closure members for withdrawal of the applicator from the respective container.

The handle may be adapted to be attached for example by screw-threading or bayonet or snap-fitting connection. In the case where the dispenser includes a casing, the casing preferably has means to accommodate the handle when not attached to any of the closure members.

Some embodiments of the invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:-

Figure 1 is a perspective view a cosmetics dispenser in accordance with the invention shown with its lid open;

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the dispenser of Figure 1, shown with the lid closed;

Figure 3 is a perspective view of a cosmetics container unit which can be used in the dispenser of Figures 1 and 2;

Figure 4 is a vertical section through a single container module, a number of which can be assembled to form the unit of Figure 3;

Figure 5 is an enlarged base plan view of the module of Figure 4;

Figures 6A to 6E illustrate five different forms of handle which can be used in a cosmetics dispenser of the present invention;

Figure 7 is a perspective view of another cosmetics package in accordance with the present invention shown in its open condition ready for use;

Figure 8 is a perspective view of the dispenser of Figure 7, shown in its closed position;

Figure 9 is a perspective view of another cosmetics dispenser in accordance with the present invention shown in its open condition;

Figure 10 is a perspective view of the cosmetics dispenser of Figure 9 shown in its closed condition;

Figure 11 is a perspective view of another cosmetics package according to the invention, shown partly opened; and

Figure 12 is another perspective view, taken from another angle, of the cosmetics package shown in Figure 11.

With reference first to Figures 1 and 2, a cosmetics dispenser according to a first embodi-

ment of the invention comprises a casing 1 having a generally rectangular base part 2 and a lid 3 hinged along one edge to the rear edge of the base part 2. The forward edge face 4 of the base part 2 has an elongate rectangular opening 5 which leads into an internal flat cuboidal cavity in the base member 2 for accommodating a cosmetics container unit 6 as shown in Figure 3.

The cosmetics container unit 6 (hereinafter referred to simply as the unit) comprises a row of containers or compartments, each closed by a respective closure member 7. The outer faces of the closure members 7 lie flush with the portions of the front face 4 surrounding the opening.

The lid 3 comprises a rectangular flat major part 8 which in the closed position shown in Figure 2 lies flat against the upper face 2a of the case part 2, and a forward lip or flange 9 which projects substantially perpendicularly to the major part 8 and which, in the closed condition of the package covers the front face 4 and thus conceals the row of closure members 7. In this closed condition, the lid also closes an elongate U-section recess 10 extending front-to-back of the base part 2 at one end thereof. This recess 10 accommodates a handle 11 adapted at one end to be engaged with any one of the closure members 7 exposed within the aperture 5 in the front face 4 of the base part 2.

A mirror 12 is fixed to or formed on the under-surface of the major portion 8 of the lid.

The lid 3 snap closes onto the base part 2 into the position as shown in Figure 2. When the lid is opened into the position shown in Figure 1, the handle 11 may be slid forwardly out of the recess 10 and attached to any selected one of the closure members 7. The selected closure member 7 and an attached applicator head (not seen in Figure 1) within the respective container or compartment can then be withdrawn from such container or compartment and cosmetic material retained on the applicator head can be applied as required. The mirror 12 can be used to aid the application procedure.

The unit 6 accommodated in the base 2 can be removed and replaced with a new unit or modified by replacement of one or more containers, and then reinserted into the base cavity.

Figure 3 illustrates one particular form in which the unit may be embodied. The unit of this embodiment comprises a plurality of (in this case ten) individual containers 6a which are attached to one another in a row, the containers being preferably molded from plastics material and of square cross-section. With reference to Figure 4, each container comprises a square section receptacle 13 having four elongate side walls and a square base wall, and a generally square closure member 7. The closure member 7 fits as a plug into the open end

of the receptacle 13 and has a peripheral lip 14 which engages over the edge of the open end of the receptacle. The closure member 7 is attached to, or formed integrally with an applicator head 15 which extends into the receptacle. The construction of the applicator head 15 will depend upon the nature of the cosmetics composition contained in the receptacle, but in the particular form illustrated in Figure 4 it comprises a central stem 16 carrying material-retaining formations comprising a number of axially extending and circumferentially distributed rows of radial teeth 17 integrally formed with the stem 16. This particular construction is well suited for the application of mascara compositions to the eyelashes. UK Patent No. 2071558 discloses a suitable method and apparatus for integrally moulding such an applicator from a plastics material.

The receptacle 13 is preferably formed with an inwardly projecting flange 18 which defines a central circular wiper orifice 19 through which the material-retaining portion of the applicator passes as the closure member 7 and applicator head 15 are withdrawn from the receptacle. As this happens, excess product is wiped from the applicator head so as to limit suitably the quantity of product retained on the withdrawn applicator head.

The outer faces of opposed side walls 13a, 13b of the receptacle are formed with complementary engagement formations so as to facilitate the assembly of the unit from the individual containers. In the illustrated form, one such sidewall 13a is formed with an elongate axially extending dovetail section projection 20, while the other surface 13b is formed with a complementary elongate dovetail recess 21. The dovetail recess 21 extends to one end (in this case the base) of the receptacle 13 to permit the individual containers to be assembled together by sliding the projection 20 of one such container into the recess 21 of another from the base end of the latter.

Numerous other possible arrangements for interconnecting the individual containers will be apparent to those skilled in the art.

Each closure member 7 is provided with a central, axially extending screw threaded bore 22 which opens onto the square outer surface of the closure member. The threaded end of the handle 11 can be screwed into this bore 22 so as to attach the handle to the applicator head and the closure member, and the applicator head can then be removed from the receptacle.

Accordingly, in the embodiment illustrated in Figures 3 to 5, the cassette is of modular construction and can be assembled from any ten selected pre-filled containers. Accordingly, a variety of cosmetics products may be included in the cosmetics pack. For example, the cassette could be assem-

bled from containers containing ten different shades of mascara, or several different shades of mascara and several different shades of eye shadow etc. It will be appreciated that if a predetermined non-selectable variety of cosmetic products is to be presented, the cassette could comprise a single container sub-divided into ten separate compartments, each with its own closure and applicator head. An intermediate level of choice could be provided by assembling the cassette from a plurality of sub-divided containers (eg from five two-compartment containers), the containers being adapted to interconnect by a similar dovetail projection and recess configuration as illustrated in Figures 4 and 5 for the individual container arrangement.

In the illustrated embodiment, the receptacles are of square section and the closure members 7 push fit into the open ends of the receptacles in a plug-closure fashion. It will be appreciated that the receptacles could be made cylindrical, and the closure members could be modified for screw-closure in or over the ends of the receptacles.

Figures 6A to 6E illustrate five different forms of handle which can be detachably secured to the closure members of the individual containers or compartments. Figure 6A shows a simple circular section rod with a screw thread 23 at one end. The handle of Figure 6B is a simple circular section rod formed at one end with a bayonet fitting 24. Figure 6C shows a handle having at one end a snap fitting comprising a pair of flexible legs 25 which can snap fit into an appropriately shaped recess in the closure member. The handle of Figure 6D is flat and has at its lower end a screw threaded shaft 23 and a widened portion 24 defining an annular shoulder 24a for engaging the top surface of the closure. Similarly, the handle of Figure 6E has a screw threaded shaft 23 and a widened base portion 24, the major part of the length of the handle, however, comprising a simple circular section rod.

Figures 7 and 8 illustrate another embodiment. In this embodiment, the unit 6 is accommodated in an elongate hollow carrier portion 26 which is pivoted at its opposite ends to respective end pieces 27a of a common base member. An elongate lid 28 is also hinged at its opposite ends to respective end pieces 27a, which project upwardly from opposite ends of a generally rectangular base piece 27. The hollow carrier portion 26 of the casing can pivot from the open position shown in Figure 7 downwardly onto the base piece 27 into the space between the upstanding end pieces 27a, whereafter the lid 28 can be pivoted downwardly to lie against the outer surface 29 of the hollow carrier portion 26. This outer surface 29 is profiled so as to accommodate the thickness of the lid 28 so that in the closed condition the outer surface 28a of the lid

wherein the containers are formed as a single compartmentalized container unit.

9. A cosmetics dispenser comprising a plurality of containers (13) each for containing a quantity of cosmetics material and each being closed by a respective closure member (7) and accommodating an applicator (15) attached to or integrally formed with said closure member, characterised in that the containers are arranged as a plurality of modules each having engagement means (20, 21) by which that module is detachably secured to at least one other of the modules, and in that a handle is provided which is adapted to be attached to any selected one of the closure members for withdrawal of the applicator from the respective container.
10. A dispenser as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the dispenser has means (10; 31; 43) to accommodate the handle when not attached to any of the closure members.

Revendications

1. Distributeur de cosmétiques comportant plusieurs réservoirs (13) respectivement destinés à contenir une certaine quantité d'un produit cosmétique et dont chacun est fermé par un organe de fermeture (7) correspondant auquel est fixé un élément applicateur (15) qui s'avance jusque dans le réservoir correspondant et peut être extrait de ce dernier et utilisé pour l'application d'un produit retenu sur lui lors de son extraction, caractérisé par des moyens (2; 20, 21; 26; 33; 40) destinés à maintenir d'une manière détachable les réservoirs sous la forme d'un ensemble, de façon que ceux-ci puissent être désassemblés et réassemblés ou assemblés avec d'autres réservoirs de ce type, et par un manche adapté pour être fixé à l'un quelconque des organes de fermeture choisis, en vue d'extraire l'applicateur du réservoir correspondant.
2. Distributeur selon la revendication 1, caractérisé en ce que les moyens de maintien comportent un boîtier (2; 26; 33, 40) destiné aux réservoirs et dans lequel ceux-ci sont encastres d'une manière amovible.
3. Distributeur selon la revendication 1 ou 2, caractérisé en ce que les moyens de maintien détachables comportent des moyens (20, 21) destinés à relier d'une manière détachable deux réservoirs adjacents.

4. Distributeur de cosmétiques comportant plusieurs réservoirs (13) respectivement destinés à contenir une certaine quantité d'un produit cosmétique et dont chacun est fermé par un organe de fermeture (7) correspondant auquel est fixé un élément applicateur (15) qui s'avance jusque dans le réservoir correspondant et peut être extrait de ce dernier et utilisé pour l'application d'un produit retenu sur lui lors de son extraction, caractérisé par un boîtier (2; 26; 33; 40) à l'intérieur duquel les réservoirs sont disposés d'une manière amovible, et par un manche adapté pour être fixé à l'un quelconque des organes de fermeture choisis, en vue d'extraire l'applicateur du réservoir correspondant.

5. Distributeur selon la revendication 4, dans lequel le boîtier comporte des éléments (2, 3; 26, 27, 28; 33, 36; 40, 42) mobiles les uns par rapport aux autres entre une position ouverte dans laquelle les organes de fermeture des réservoirs sont apparents, et une position fermée dans laquelle les réservoirs sont totalement cachés.

6. Distributeur selon la revendication 4 ou 5, dans lequel les réservoirs sont accouplés d'une manière détachable selon une conception modulaire, chaque module comportant au moins un réservoir.

7. Distributeur selon la revendication 6, dans lequel le boîtier comporte plusieurs cavités destinées à recevoir les modules d'une manière bien ajustée.

8. Distributeur selon la revendication 4 ou 5, dans lequel les réservoirs sont réalisés sous la forme d'un ensemble de réservoirs compartimenté unique.

9. Distributeur de cosmétiques comportant plusieurs réservoirs (13) respectivement destinés à contenir une certaine quantité d'un produit cosmétique et dont chacun est fermé par un organe de fermeture (7) correspondant et loge un applicateur (15) fixé audit organe de fermeture ou formé solidairement avec celui-ci, caractérisé en ce que les réservoirs sont conçus sous la forme de plusieurs modules dont chacun comporte des moyens d'accouplement (20, 21) à l'aide desquels ce module est assujéti d'une manière détachable à l'un au moins des autres modules, en ce qu'il est prévu un manche adapté pour être fixé à l'un quelconque des organes de fermeture choisis, en vue d'extraire l'applicateur du réservoir correspon-

dant.

10. Distributeur selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel le distributeur comporte des moyens (10; 31; 43) pour loger le manche, lorsque celui-ci n'est pas fixé à l'un quelconque des organes de fermeture.

Patentansprüche

1. Spender für Schminke mit einer Anzahl von Behältern (13) jeweils zur Aufnahme einer Kosmetikmaterialmenge und jeweils verschlossen durch ein entsprechendes Verschußteil (7), an dem ein Auftrageil (15) angebracht ist, das in den jeweiligen Behälter hineinragt und hiervon entnommen und für die Anwendung von Material, das hieran bei der Entnahme anhaftet, benutzt werden kann, **gekennzeichnet** durch Mittel (2; 20, 21; 26; 33; 40) zur lösbaren Halterung der Behälter in einer solchen Anordnung, daß die Behälter auseinandergenommen und miteinander wieder zusammengesetzt oder mit weiteren solchen Behältern zusammengesetzt werden können, und durch einen Handgriff, der für die Anbringung an irgendeinem ausgewählten Verschußteil zur Entnahme des Auftrageils aus dem entsprechenden Behälter eingerichtet ist.
2. Spender nach Anspruch 1, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die lösbare Halterungseinrichtung ein Gehäuse (2; 26; 33, 40) für die Behälter aufweist, in das die Behälter entfernbar eingesetzt sind.
3. Spender nach Anspruch 1 oder 2, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die lösbare Halterungseinrichtung Mittel (20, 21) zur lösbaren Verbindung eines Paares benachbarter Behälter aufweist.
4. Spender für Schminke mit einer Anzahl von Behältern (13) jeweils zur Aufnahme einer Kosmetikmaterialmenge und jeweils verschlossen durch ein entsprechendes Verschußteil (7), an dem ein Auftrageil (15) angebracht ist, das in den jeweiligen Behälter hineinragt und hiervon entnommen und für die Anwendung von Material, das hieran bei der Entnahme anhaftet, benutzt werden kann, **gekennzeichnet** durch ein Gehäuse (2; 26; 33; 40), innerhalb dessen die Behälter entfernbar angeordnet sind, und durch einen Handgriff, der für die Anbringung an irgendeinem ausgewählten Verschußteil zur Entnahme des Auftrageils aus dem entsprechenden Behälter eingerichtet ist.

5. Spender nach Anspruch 4, worin das Gehäuse Teile (2, 3; 26, 27, 28; 33, 36; 40, 42) aufweist, die sich relativ zueinander in eine offene Lage, in der die Verschußteile der Behälter freiliegen, und eine geschlossene Lage bewegen können, in der die Behälter vollständig verborgen sind.
6. Spender nach Anspruch 4 oder 5, worin die Behälter abnehmbar in eine Modulanordnung eingreifen, wobei jedes Modul einen oder mehrere Behälter aufweist.
7. Spender nach Anspruch 6, worin das Gehäuse mehrere Aussparungen aufweist, um die Moduln festsitzend aufzunehmen.
8. Spender nach Anspruch 4 oder 5, worin die Behälter als eine einzige, mit Abteilungen versehene Behältereinheit ausgebildet ist.
9. Spender für Schminke mit einer Anzahl von Behältern (13) jeweils zur Aufnahme einer Kosmetikmaterialmenge und das jeweils verschlossen ist durch ein entsprechendes Verschußteil (7) sowie ein Auftrageil (15) aufnimmt, das am Verschußteil angebracht oder einstückig mit diesem ausgebildet ist, dadurch **gekennzeichnet**, daß die Behälter als eine Anzahl von Moduln mit jeweils Eingriffsmitteln (20, 21) ausgebildet sind, durch die dieses Modul abnehmbar an mindestens einem anderen der Moduln befestigt ist, und daß ein Handgriff vorgesehen ist, der für die Anbringung an irgendeinem ausgewählten Verschußteil zur Entnahme des Auftrageils aus dem entsprechenden Behälter eingerichtet ist.
10. Spender nach jedem vorangehendem Anspruch, worin der Spender Mittel (10; 31; 43) zur Unterbringung des Handgriffs aufweist, wenn er nicht an irgendeinem der Verschußteile angebracht ist.



